

FACT SHEET
Operator Reimbursement Program
May 20, 2008

1. The Operator Reimbursement Program began on July 1, 2002 and will end on June 30, 2010; **qualifying expenses incurred between July 1, 2002 and May 31, 2010 will be reimbursed if received in the DEQ Operator Certification office by May 31, 2010.**
2. Operators must work for systems that serve 3,300 people or less.
3. The systems must be Community or Non-Transient Non-Community Public Water Supply systems.
4. Expenses for wastewater certification are not eligible.
5. Operators or system owners must initially pay for all expenses discussed below and then request reimbursement using forms provided by the Department.
6. The operator's employment must be verified by their employer or the owner of the system.
7. **Yearly operator renewal fees and operator training costs** for approved continuing education credits (CEC's) acquired in Montana that are required every two years are eligible. These include the cost of the course, study materials required for the course, and travel (see #9 below).
 - a. Renewal fees paid and request for reimbursement received prior to the May 2010 deadline will be eligible for reimbursement. You will receive a statement for these fees in April or May of each year.
 - b. Operators must be fully certified or grandfathered operators to receive reimbursement for continuing education credits.
 - c. Expenses for 3 or fewer operators for each system qualify for reimbursement per state fiscal year.
 - d. Operators must meet required training for the two-year CEC renewal requirements. Operators-in-training are not required to acquire CECs.
8. Application and exam fees and pre-exam training for applicants are eligible for reimbursement. These include the cost of the course, study materials required for the course, and travel (see #9 below).
 - a. Applicants must have an active application with the DEQ certification office to receive pre-exam training.
 - b. Only one application and one exam fee will be reimbursed per system per State fiscal year for systems with less than three operators.
 - c. Reimbursement for only one pre-exam training session per applicant is paid.
9. Mileage to and from class is eligible at current Federal rates. Per Diem for lodging and meals is eligible at State rates for **unpaid operators** only (operators that do not receive a salary/payment for their services). Owners of a facility do not qualify as unpaid.
 - a. As per Federal rates set forth mileage will be reimbursed at \$0.445 per mile for 2006; \$0.485 per mile for 2007; \$0.505 per mile for January 1, 2008 through June 30, 2008 and \$0.585 per mile from July 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008.
 - b. Meals are eligible if an operator travels longer than 3 continuous hours in each time range shown below and a distance greater than 15 miles from home.
 - i. Morning 12:01AM to 10:00 AM \$ 5.00
 - ii. Midday 10:01 AM to 3:00 PM \$ 6.00
 - iii. Evening 3:01 PM to 12:00 Midnight \$12.00
 - c. Maximum allowable reimbursement for lodging prior to October 1, 2007 is \$60.00 plus 7.5% bed tax and after October 1, 2007 the maximum allowable reimbursement for lodging will be \$70.00 plus 7% bed tax (other rates will apply based on state rates for high-cost Montana cities). The single room rate must be included on the receipt.
 - d. Maximum allowable reimbursement for lodging without a receipt is \$12.00.
10. Please visit our website at <http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/opcert/index.asp> or contact Channah Wells at 444-3071 or Shelley Nolan at 444-4071 if you should have questions.